

NEWS

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Mountain Safety Resource Guide mailed to mountain residents

Mountain residents will soon receive in the mail a resource guide produced by the County of San Bernardino with information on the bark beetle crisis, including disaster preparedness tips and services for removing infested trees.

An ongoing drought has made forest evergreens vulnerable to the bark beetle, a tiny insect that bores deep into trees. As a result, millions of dead and dying trees cover approximately 350,000 acres in the county's mountain communities. The dead, dry trees pose a serious fire danger.

"We created this resource guide to help mountain residents cope with this crisis. We're confident our residents will find it to be a helpful resource," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Dennis Hansberger.

In June 2003 the county received \$2.6 million in federal funding primarily to help remove dead trees, however some of the funding was set aside for public education. The Board of Supervisors approved the resource guide as part of the public education effort.

"This is the latest of many steps taken by the county to address the bark beetle crisis and prepare residents for any impending disaster," said Supervisor Paul Biane.

The county has produced 50,000 copies of the guide, including 4,000 in Spanish, and will mail them today to each mountain residence from Wrightwood through Forest Falls. To obtain a copy of this guide in Spanish, please call the San Bernardino County Fire Department at (909) 386-8400.

"There is a lot of important information in this guide. We encourage residents to read it and keep it near their phones or in their cars," said Supervisor Bill Postmus.